

REMARKS

The Examiner has rejected claims 1 to 4 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Miller U.S. Patent No. 4,420,161. Reconsideration is requested. The Miller stator has no damper sections. The Examiner points to spaces between the teeth 24, 25 on the rotor and calls those damper sections. They are not. They are part of the labyrinth seal. The language of claim 1 clearly provides that the damping sections and the labyrinth seal sections are "interleaved." Thus, one cannot be within the other. Moreover, nothing in the reference suggests that the spaces between the teeth of the labyrinth seal comprise damper sections. Finally, even if they did, they are not part of the stator.

The Examiner has rejected claims 2 and 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Miller in view of von Pragenau U.S. Patent No. 4,545,586. The Examiner states:

Miller discloses the invention substantially as claimed above but fails to disclose that the damper sections are honeycomb segments or hole pattern segments. Von Pragenau teaches to have a stationary member with damper section to have hole pattern segments or honeycomb segments (figure 1-2). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have the damper sections of Miller to be replaced by damper section of Von Pragenau, to reduce flow which provides better damping effect (column 2, lines 40-68 of Von Pragenau).

Reconsideration is requested.

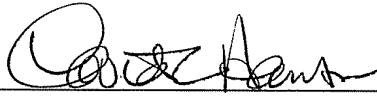
The von Pragenau reference teaches that a roughened surface produces a high flow resistance that keeps the leakage lower than in labyrinth seals, but also hinders circumferential flow. The purpose of the roughness of von Pragenau is to reduce both leakage flow (axial flow) and circumferential flow. In fact, it is stated that the axial flow is reduced better than with a labyrinth seal. It is suggested as a replacement for damper seals.

The only suggestion provided in von Pragenau is to replace the labyrinth seal of Miller altogether. There is no suggestion or apparent good reason to select parts of Miller and parts of von Pragenau and reassemble them as set forth by the Applicants' claims

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In view of the foregoing remarks, it urged this case in now in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,
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